

## CURRICULUM VITAE

**ASGHAR SOOMRO**

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### Education:

Degree	Major / Minor	Institution	Date (mm/yyyy)
M.Phil.	Development Studies	University of Sindh, Jamshoro	Continues
M.A.	Sociology	University of Sindh, Jamshoro	2006
B.A.	English, Political Science & Muslim History	University of Sindh	2002

5. Membership in Professional Associations: N/A

7. Other Training/Events (international):

- International Visitors Leadership Program - (IVLP) Washington DC (25<sup>th</sup> Nov – 18<sup>th</sup> Dec 17), organised by State Department, USA
- Participated as speaker in a conference on education, held in Houston, Texas, USA, September 2015
- Exposure visit to study BRAC education model in Bangladesh – April 2014.
- Project and Contract Management Training Workshop, UK – Feb 26<sup>th</sup> to March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007.
- First Arab Regional Conference on Family Protection, Jordan – Dec 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>, 2005.
- New Approaches Addressing Violence against Women, Manchester **UK**– Nov 21<sup>st</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> 2004

### National Trainings/Events attended:

- Master Class in Creative Writing organised by Pakistan US Alumni Network & U.S Mission in Pakistan
- Two days training workshop on “Environmental and Social Management” by World Bank in 2019
- Two days training workshop on Communication for Development by UNICEF in 2019

8. Countries of Work Experience:

Pakistan

9. Languages:

	Speaking	Reading	Writing
English	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Urdu	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Sindhi	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

**10. Employment Record:**

**From:** 16<sup>th</sup> April 2018 to date

**Employer:** Planning and Development Department, Government of Sindh on World Bank Project

**Position Held:** Communication Specialist

**From:** 07<sup>th</sup> September 2020 – 28 February 2021

**Employer:** Planning and Development Department, Government of Sindh on World Bank Project

**Position Held:** Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist (Additional charge)

**From:** July 2016 – June 2017

**Employer:** Education and Literacy Department, Government of Sindh on World Bank Project

**Position Held:** Communication Specialist

**From:** June 2013 – July 2016

**Employer:** Education Fund for Sindh, UKaid/DfID

**Position Held:** Head of Programme

**From:** November 2012 – April 2013

**Employer:** ZABIST/UNICEF

**Position Held:** Consultant on Sindh Education Sector Plan – 2013-15

**From:** August 2011 – June 2013

**Employer:** Social Policy and Development Centre, Karachi

**Position Held:** Advisor, Communication and Outreach

**From:** February 2010 – July 2011

**Employer:** American Institute for Research, Edlinks project

**Position Held:** Senior Program Officer for Sindh and Balochistan on Education Governance, Policy and Management

**From:** October 2004 – February 2010

**Employer:** British Council Pakistan

**Position Held:** Social Campaign Manager

**From:** September 2001 – October 2004

**Employer:** Sindh Education Foundation, Govt. of Sindh

**Position Held:** Program Associate, Women's Literacy & Empowerment Program

**From:** May 2001 – September 2001

**Employer:** Sindh Education Foundation, Govt. of Sindh

**Position Held:** Field Officer, Women's Literacy & Empowerment Program

**From:** June 2000 – May 2001

**Employer:** Sindh Education Foundation, Govt. of Sindh

**Position Held:** Community Mobilizer, Community Supported Schools Program

**11. Detailed Tasks Assigned**

- Achievement of DLIs (Disbursement Linked Indicators) related to communication under World Bank supported projects.
- Development of Social and Behaviour Change Communication Strategy
- Launch of Social and Social and Behaviour Change Communication Strategy

- Development of project website, dashboard and brand identity
- Coordination and communication with all relevant stakeholders
- Organisation of international, national and provincial level seminars and workshops
- Preparation of project briefs, speeches and talking points for senior government officials as well as oversight of project deliverables
- Achievement of 49000 out of school children in low cost private schools
- Disbursement of Rs.500 million to partner NGOs
- Review Laws, policies, history of Public Private Partnership (PPP) models in Pakistan and compared them with Academies Model in UK and Chartered Schools Model in USA.
- Conduct a research on educational woes in Sindh and write chapters on teacher education management, gender and public private partnership in education.
- Conduct research on impact of 18<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan and then write a chapter on Local Government Systems in Pakistan
- Analysis of education policies and governance system in Sindh and Balochistan
- Impact study of the head teachers' program in 22 districts of Sindh and Baluchistan.
- Support in development of proposal for Sindh Education Reform Technical Assistance (SER-TA).
- Oversight and management of Sindh Education Reform Technical Assistance (SER-TA)
- Identification of potential partner organisations, negotiations, preparation of contracts
- Contracts and project management of partner organisations
- Establishment of women's literacy and empowerment centres
- Establishment of community supported schools
- Formation as well as training of school management committees
- Organisation of trainings for teachers and communities
- Organisation of women groups for running literacy centres at community level
- Organisation
- Support in organising projects' external and internal audits

**12.1 Name of Assignment or project:** Sindh Enhancing Response to Reduce Stunting and Malnutrition (SRRSP) – World Bank supported Project.

**Year:** 2017 - 2021

**Client:** Planning and Development Department, Government of Sindh

**Main Project Features:** Reduction of stunting among children under 05 years in targeted 23 districts of Sindh where rate of stunting was above 40 pc. It is a multi-sectoral project involving eight sectors i.e.; health, education, livestock, fisheries, agriculture, population welfare, WASH and social protection and strategy unit (SPSU).

**Position held:** Communication Specialist

**Activities performed:**

- Achieved both DLIs related to communication by developing multi-sectoral Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) Plan including budgets, Monitoring Plan and timelines.
- Implemented SBCC campaign across 08 sectors as well as development partners
  - 300 wall painting with nutrition messages
  - 20 cooking shows on Sindhi TV Channels
  - 40 animated videos on various aspects of nutrition
  - 20 newspapers articles got published in major Urdu and Sindhi newspapers
  - One documentary produced and aired on private TV channel
  - One jingle on theme of nutrition in Sindhi and Urdu produced
  - One Tv drama produced and aired on private TV channels
- Achieved development of AAP Website, AAP Dashboard (MIS System) and project Logo
- Organized Provincial Nutrition Steering Committee Meetings
- Organized provincial level conferences and workshops
- Conducted close coordination and liaison with eight sectors as well as development partners working in Sindh.

- Provided technical support and input to Nutrition Coordinator to Chief Minister Sindh and Program Manager AAP.
- Supported Program Coordinator in organizing performance review meetings with AAP Sectors as well as development partners.
- Prepared minutes of the project progress review meetings and then followed up on the action points agreed in those meetings.
- Looked after charge of Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist for a year; successfully supported World Bank Team in preparing project implementation completion report (ICR), besides that conducted field visits, prepared comprehensive reports and communicated observation with the concerned sectors and officials.

**Name of Assignment or project:** Sindh Global Partnership for Education -World Bank

**Year:** April 2015 – December 2017

**Client:** Reform Support Unit, Education and Literacy Department, Govt. of Sindh

**Main Project Features:** The Project supports the implementation of the Sindh Education Sector Support Program (SESP).

**Position held:** Communication Specialist

**Activities performed:**

- Achieved Disbursement Linked Indicator (DLI) by finalizing communications strategy along with implementation plan for School Education and Literacy Department, Government of Sindh.
- First time established electronic media monitoring cell and then prepared rebuttals in consultation with Secretary, Education & Literacy Dept. Govt. of Sindh
- Regularly published *Reformer*, newsletter. For reaching out wider audience started Urdu and Sindhi version of the newsletter.
- Prepared various communication products such as media guides, brochures, presentations and reports for dissemination under Communication Strategy of Sindh Education Sector Reform Program- SERP II, SESP and SDGs Information and Communication Strategy.
- Coordination and liaison with divisional and district education offices across Sindh, local education group (LEG) group member organizations, Minister and Secretary, School Education & Literacy Department (SE&LD). Successful communication helped in ensuring a regular flow of information and the developing consensus towards shared education reform goals.
- Oversight of the management and delivery of all information and communication activities relating to the education, Sindh Education Sector Reform Program - SERP II, Sindh Education Sector Plan (SESP) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including managing a communication work program, monitoring and evaluating communication activities and outputs against key indicators.
- Devised innovative and engaging communications products and campaigns that informed, interested and inspired support, changed behavior and action among beneficiaries and stakeholders towards improving education at all levels of the sector, improving governance, quality and access.
- Managed all staff in the Information and Communication Unit, and supported senior officers in RSU in their coordination with District Education Departments, Local Education Group, donors and other relevant stakeholders.
- Conducted periodic feedback, consultations with internal and external stakeholders, on the basis of which updated the mechanisms and tools of communications for achieving enhanced outcomes.
- Provided strategic support in design, development and proper usage of Dashboard (internal communications system), besides handled complaints via partner organization.
- Organized donor coordination meetings in which chalked out key areas for future education programs in Sindh
- Provided technical support to SELD in organizing an annual Joint Education Sector Review

- Prepared talking points as well as speeches for Secretary Education, Minister of Education and Chief Minister Sindh for high profile public events.

**Name of Assignment or project:** Education Fund for Sindh -EFS

**Year:** June 2013 to July 2016

**Client:** Education Fund for Sindh, UK aid/DfID

**Main Project Features:** EFS was responsible for running education voucher scheme in Karachi and two other districts (Khairpur Mirs and Qambar Shahdadkot) in interior of Sindh. The overall goal of the project was to enrol 100,000 out of school by providing vouchers to private schools, per child subsidy to NGO managed schools and adopting public schools.

**Position held:** Head of Programs

**Activities performed:**

- Enrolled 49,000 out of school children in schools within two years through intermediary partner organizations ie The Citizen Foundation, BRAC International and Green Crescent Trust.
- Conducted pre-qualification exercise (due diligence) on organizations seeking funding and then took four capable organizations on board.
- Introduced a new program called *Hybrid Voucher Education Scheme* which helped in enrolling 500 out of school children through a small intermediary organization.
- Reviewed Laws, policies, history of Public Private Partnership (PPP) models in Pakistan and compared them with Academies Model in UK and Chartered Schools Model in USA.
- Organized a one-day policy dialogue on PPP in which all relevant stakeholders participated.
- Initiated a dialogue on a need for separate Public Private Partnership (PPP) policy for School Education & Literacy Department, Government of Sindh
- Facilitated the CEO in preparing correspondence for various approval by the Board of Directors.
- Annually managed funds worth PKR. 500 million

**Name of Assignment or project:** Sindh Education Sector Plan (SESP) -2013-15

**Year:** 2012-13

**Client:** SZABIST, funded by UNICEF

**Main Project Features:** Development of Five-year Education Sector Plan for Sindh Province.

**Position held:** Consultant (Capacity Building Specialist)

**Activities performed:**

- Conducted discussions with Technical Working Group's (TWG) and then prepared draft report featuring main highlights concerning the following themes:
- Teacher Education and Development in Sindh
- Management and Governance
- Gender Equity
- Social Cohesion
- Played instrumental role in developing detailed three-year plan indicating strategies, activities and timelines for the aforementioned themes.
- Developed a complete chapter on Teacher Education and Development excluding budget.

**Name of Assignment or project:** Impact of Devolution in Pakistan

**Year:** 2011-13

**Client:** Social Policy and Development Centre (SPDC), Karachi

**Main Project Features:** To assess impact of 18<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan on social development in Pakistan.

**Position held:** Advisor, Communication and Outreach

#### Activities performed:

As member of core research team worked on a research study focused on measuring impact of 18<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan on social development in Pakistan. Specifically, contributed a chapter on Local Government Systems across four provinces of Pakistan.

#### Other activities performed:

- supported senior team at SPDC in bringing out regular publications on time
- Prepared media and communication strategy for SPDC's proposal on climate change
- Reviewed SPDC website and brochures and brought the organization on social networking sites for wider dissemination of its work i.e; Facebook, twitter, Youtube
- Identified and contacted relevant experts related to each theme of SPDC's annual flagship study on devolution in Pakistan after the 18th amendment
- Identified suitable local partner organizations in three districts namely Dadu, Badin and Tharparkar and then successfully formed formal partnership with them.
- Organized and designed capacity building workshops for partner NGOs
- Wrote researched based articles for leading English newspapers of Pakistan
- Achieved an excellent coverage in all leading newspapers as well as on electronic media of SPDC's Annual Review launch in Islamabad and other publications' inauguration in Karachi.
- Represented SPDC at different forums

**Name of Assignment or project:** Ed-Links USAID

**Year:** 2010-11

**Client:** American Institute for Research

**Main Project Features:** The Links to Learning Program (ED-LINKS) (2007-2012) aimed to improve the quality and sustainability of teacher education and student performance in the targeted geographical areas of Sindh, Balochistan, Islamabad Capital Territory, and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Furthermore, ED-LINKS/Pakistan worked at all levels of Pakistan's education system to improve professional development, student learning and the learning environment, and the capacity of the government to sustain quality education.

**Position held:** Senior Program Officer

#### Activities performed:

- Provided technical and programmatic support to the senior team in preparation of work plan, setting clear targets and indicators as well as implementation thereof.
- Liaised closely with provincial education offices and project officers for proper implementation of activities
- Planning and execution of capacity building activities with support from the team
- Conducted analysis of education policies and governance system in Sindh and Balochistan
- Prepared correspondence for consideration and approval of Program Advisor and Regional Director Sindh
- Supported in monitoring and evaluation activities
- **As team leader (sixteen members' team) successfully carried out an impact study of the head teachers program in 22 districts in Sindh and Baluchistan.**
- Conducted policy analysis of teachers' education and development programs in Sindh
- Organized training on modern English language teaching methodology and techniques for government teachers from across Sindh in collaboration with Department of Education, Sindh
- Provided technical input in design and implementation and supervised mid-term evaluation of 46 schools located across Sindh, Baluchistan and Islamabad Capital Territory.
- Reviewed and revised number of project documents

**Name of Assignment or project:** Sindh Education Reform Technical Assistance (SER-TA) funded by European Union.

**Year:** 2007-2010

**Client:** British Council Pakistan

**Main Project Features:** The Technical Assistance to the Sindh Education Sector Programme supported the Government of Sindh with the development of the province's education sector. Specifically, the assignment aimed to increase efficiency in public spending, implement school consolidation plan and improve quality of education. Value of the project was €5.1 million

**Position held:** Project Manager

**Activities performed:**

- Supported Project Delivery Manager in Manchester UK, Project Director and British Council Provincial Director for Sindh in ensuring effective planning, implementation and operational responses to Government of Sindh and project donor, European Commission Pakistan.
- Successfully managed a project budget of 4.5 million Euros, ensuring that budgets for consultants and incidental expenses were fully and appropriately utilized in the acquisition of services and equipment's relevant to the defined budget lines.
- Prepared, managed and monitored contracts with national and international consultants as well as project staff
- Developed strong and positive relationship with Reform Support Unit, Education and Literacy Department, Government of Sindh, local and international consortium partners.
- Provided support in preparing annual input plan
- Supported in organizing international training program for government officials in Holland.
- Supported the team in arranging 3 bi-annual external audits.

**Name of Assignment or project:** Anti-Honour Killing Awareness Raising Project, funded by British Government's Foreign and Commonwealth Office, UK

**Year:** 2004-07

**Client:**

**Main Project Features:** The project aimed to raise public awareness about menace of *Karo Kari* under which people are killed, mainly women by close relatives in the name of family honour.

**Position held:** Social Campaign Manager

**Activities performed:**

- Identified potential organizations for partnership, invited proposals from them, evaluated their submitted proposals, conducted due diligence prior to signing off the contracts.
- Regularly monitored progress of the hired NGOs
- Disbursed funds to the contracted NGOs
- Organized conferences; one international, one national and one provincial. In those events UK, Jordan, Turkey, Bangladesh and India participated. As for the local participation, then chief justice of Pakistan, Provincial Ministers (women Development, education, home department), Provincial Head of Police, students from various universities and important civil society members attended the events.
- Organized two police trainings for senior police officer on murder investigation in collaboration with UK police and Sindh police.
- Produced seven TV dramas, one documentary and one music video on the theme of honor killing.

- Organized 60 mobile street theatre performances across Sindh & Punjab
- Organized poster competition among school going children on the theme of honor killings
- Ensured publication of 60 newspaper articles in Sindhi, Urdu and English languages
- Prepared and submitted quarterly and annual progress reports to the project donor
- Managed relationship with donors and project steering committee members.
- Managed project funds worth up to £127,600

**Name of Assignment or project:** Women's Literacy and Empowerment Program

**Year:** 2001 - 2004

**Client:** Sindh Education Foundation, Govt. of Sindh funded by UNESCO

**Main Project Features:** To empower women by establishing adult learning centres in rural areas of Karachi and district Jamshoror (Sehwan Sharif).

**Position held:** Program Associate

**Activities performed:**

- Established 23 adult learning centres within the space donated by communities
- Hired learning facilitators for those centres
- Conducted community mobilization sessions in villages for enrolling adult female learners and their regular attendance.
- Organised training workshops for the learning facilitators
- Supported the project director in developing primers for adult learners
- Supporting the project director in printing of the primers
- Regular monitoring of adult learning centres and problem solving
- Prepared progress and financial expenditure reports on quarterly basis
- Coordinated with communities and other relevant stakeholder during periodic monitoring exercise by the project donor UNESCO

**Name of Assignment or project:** Community Supported Schools Program

**Year:** 2000-2001

**Client:** Sindh Education Foundation, Govt. of Sindh

**Main Project Features:** To provide education to out of school children in disadvantaged and uncharted areas of Sindh by establishing community supported schools.

**Position held:** Community Mobilizer

**Activities performed:**

- Organised meeting with parents of children
- Supported project lead in a process of hiring of teachers for community schools
- Supported the project lead in organising teachers' training and subsequent refresher courses
- Monitored schools - checked students' attendance and provided mentoring support to the teachers in the classroom.
- Prepared field visit report



## PUBLICATIONS/OP-ED ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN MAJORE ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS OF PAKISTAN

“An Impact Study on Head Teachers Program in 22 districts in Sindh and Balochistan”

The following are hyperlinks to some of the articles published in the leading English newspapers of Pakistan.

Save Education

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1711229>

Assault on Provincial Autonomy

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/893339-assault-on-provincial-autonomy>

Exam malpractices

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1636337/exam-malpractice>

Sindh's education priorities

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1814654/6-sindhs-education-priorities/>

Menace of land grabbing

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1697074/6-menace-land-grabbing/>

Why PML-N drags its heels on NFC?

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1661149/6-pml-n-drags-heels-nfc/>

Emerging Political Alternatives to PPP in Sindh

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1642139/6-emerging-political-alternatives-ppp-sindh/>

Ignoring Girls education in Sindh

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1619847/6-ignoring-girls-education-sindh/>

Illusion of Democracy in Balochistan

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1609445/6-illusion-democracy-balochistan/>

Unnecessary crackdown against NGOs

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1601768/6-unnecessary-crackdown-ngos/>

The slide continues

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1353136/the-slide-continues>

Education Failure

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1339181>

Structural changes for ending malnutrition?

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1316323/structural-changes-ending-malnutrition/>

Do we really care for special children?

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1284576/really-care-special-children/>

Social deterrence to bad governance

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1265575/social-deterrence-bad-governance/>

Education Emergency in Sindh

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1187231/education-emergency-sindh/>

Accidents or murders?

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1149148/accidents-or-murders/>

How can we only blame teachers?

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1003988/how-can-we-only-blame-the-teachers/>

A broken system

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1220646/a-broken-system>

Education: overstepping the constitutional limit

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/941812/education-overstepping-constitutional-limits/>

Crumbing School of Thought

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/907959/crumbling-schools-of-thought/>

Reforms for Schools

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/855342/reforms-for-schools/>

Tackling the poor quality of education

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/836765/tackling-the-poor-quality-of-teaching/>

A hieratical education system

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/780073/a-hierarchical-education-system/>

Changing Bangladesh

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/699413/changing-bangladesh/>

Dark realities

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-259799-Dark-realities>

Invisible education reforms

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/671798/invisible-education-reforms/>

Education Challenges in Sindh

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/656501/education-challenges-in-sindh/>

Education Reforms in Sindh

<http://dawn.com/news/1047354/education-reforms-in-sindh>

Squandered Funds

<http://beta.dawn.com/news/1011310/squandered-funds>

Teachers' Absenteeism

<http://dawn.com/2013/01/25/teachers-absenteeism/>

The decline in Sindh

<http://www.dawn.com/2011/12/20/the-decline-in-sindh.html>

What about educators? – Daily DAW

<http://www.dawn.com/2011/07/26/what-about-the-educators.html>

*Sorry State of Education*- Daily DAWN

<http://www.dawn.com/2011/03/27/sorry-state-of-education.html>

*Why short-term remedies?* -Daily DAWN

<http://www.dawn.com/2011/02/24/why-short-term-remedies.html>

*Governance and education*- Daily DAWN

<http://www.dawn.com/2011/01/04/governance-education.html>

**No workable policy-** Daily DAWN

<http://www.dawn.com/2010/12/11/no-workable-policy-by-asghar-soomro.html>

**What Stakes in education-** Daily DAWN

<http://www.dawn.com/2010/11/25/what-stakes-in-education-by-asghar-soomro.html>

**Need to overhaul education system-** Daily DAWN

<http://www.dawn.com/2010/11/11/need-to-overhaul-education-system.html>

Views on appalling standards of education in BBC URDU story ( main bulletin)

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/urdu/multimedia/2011/10/000000\\_sairbeen.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/urdu/multimedia/2011/10/000000_sairbeen.shtml)

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/urdu/pakistan/2011/11/111122\\_sindh\\_school\\_education\\_tk.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/urdu/pakistan/2011/11/111122_sindh_school_education_tk.shtml)